

Employee Policy Manual Changes

XVI. SPECIFIC BENTON COUNTY PERSONNEL AND SALARY ADMINISTRATION POLICIES AND GUIDELINES:

C. CLASSIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYEES:

1. **REGULAR FULL-TIME:** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work the county's full-time work schedule of 40 hours per week (~~36~~ **30** or more hours per week-benefits eligible), and who are not assigned to a temporary classification. Regular full-time employees are, in most cases, eligible for all Benton County benefit programs, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.
2. **PART-TIME EMPLOYEES- Benefits Eligible:** Employees who are regularly scheduled to work LESS than ~~36~~ **30** hours per week but more than 20 hours per week and who are not in a temporary classification. This classification are "benefits eligible" employees who receive all legally mandated benefits, such as Social Security, and worker's compensation insurance; as well as Arkansas Public Employees Retirement and part-time vacation accrual.

XVII. MEDICAL INSURANCE:

All full-time County employees, **who work and average of 30 hours a week or more per year**, are eligible to participate in a paid group health benefit plan. Participation becomes effective on the first of the month after completion of the initial ~~three-month~~ **two-month** benefit-waiting period. The county pays the insurance premium for the employee. Family coverage is available to eligible employees at the employee's expense. Part-time employees (**less than an average of 30 hours a week or more per year**,) are not eligible to participate in the county's medical insurance program. The elected offices of Justice of the Peace, ~~Coroner~~, Surveyor, and Constables are not eligible for the health benefit plan paid by the county. Eligible employees electing not to participate in the paid health plan will not receive alternate insurance or a cash sum in lieu of the program and must sign documentation waiving their coverage choice. Justices of the Peace may participate in the health plan at their own expense. Current part-time employees who are promoted into a full-time position, Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, and Deputy Public Defender Attorneys who transfer from state-funded positions to county-funded positions without any break in employment become eligible to participate in the group health benefit plan immediately. Insurance coverage will end on the last day of the month in which you last worked. Vacation leave, non-FMLA sick leave, and grievance pay does not apply in the calculation of last day of coverage. **Employees will be automatically be enrolled in the medical insurance plan if they do not "opt-out" of coverage at the conclusion of the two-month benefit waiting period.**

XXVIII. SMOKING:

~~Benton County prohibits smoking throughout the workplace. In compliance with Arkansas Act 8, *The Arkansas Clean Indoor Air Act*” smoking is prohibited in all county owned buildings and facilities and vehicles.~~

~~This policy applies equally to all employees, as well as to our customers and visitors. Smoking is only allowed in designated areas outside of the county buildings.~~

To protect and enhance our air quality and to contribute to the health and well-being of all employees, Benton County buildings and facilities shall be entirely tobacco free effective October 10, 2013. As of this date the use of all tobacco products, including chewing tobacco, is banned from the County workplace. Tobacco Free Workplace applies to all regular full-time and part-time employees, volunteers, visitors, and Jurors.

All tobacco use is prohibited in areas within the County worksites, without exception, this includes the use of electronic cigarettes. This policy involves common work areas; maintenance facilities, classrooms, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, hallways, the break rooms, stairs, restrooms, and employer owned or leased vehicles, county road equipment, and all other facilities. Specifically included is the main courthouse and both courthouse annexes, the Juvenile Justice Center, and the Road Departments.

No one may smoke along any path way or walk way leading to or from the entry ways of any county buildings, nor may employees smoke at the picnic tables nor outdoors in any of the grassy areas or the county owned parking lots. The county does not have jurisdiction of any city sidewalks or city owned parking lots, therefore use of tobacco in these area does not fall under this policy.

Additionally, employees may smoke in their personal vehicles, but the smoke and tobacco products must be completely contained within the vehicle. It is not acceptable that either smoking or non-smoking employees are subjected to smoke that they must walk through to reach their vehicle or any other destination on the (County) premises.

No additional breaks are allowed to any employee who smokes or uses tobacco. Finally, smokers and users of tobacco products must dispose of the remains in the proper containers. This helps to keep a neat and clean environment for all employees and our visiting partners and customers.

Failure to comply with all of the components of this policy will result in disciplinary action that can lead up to and include employment termination.

This policy is effective October 10, 2013.

XXXX CERTIFICATE PAY

When an employee achieves certain professional certifications, degrees, and/or technical certifications he/she brings more value to the County. If certifications/degrees are beneficial and necessary to the operations of an elected official, that elected official may develop a plan and submit the plan to the Quorum Court for funding consideration. Each plan should include the title of the certification/type of degree; how obtaining this certification/type of degree benefits the organization; and the amount of additional wages associated with obtaining the certification/degree.

If the County pays for the certification/training, the employee must remain in his/her current position for six months. If the employee leaves Benton County employment prior to the six month period, 75% of the total cost of the program (registration, travel, lodging, and expenses) will be taken from their last paycheck.

Changes to the Salary Administration Policy

H. SALARY ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM:

1. Salary adjustments for all county employees may be given as set out herein.
 - a. Types of Increases: All employees may receive a base salary increase through a market adjustment, merit, and/or promotion. A Salary Pay Range is approved by the QC at the annual budget process for the following year.
 - b. Payment within the Range: All employees shall be paid at an equitable level within the prescribed salary range for their classification, with each position having a prescribed salary grade, as adopted by the Quorum Court in the Annual Benton County Budget. No employee will receive a salary adjustment that causes the person's salary to exceed the salary range maximum without approval by the Quorum Court. The salary range established by the JESAP Committee will fully compensate for proven performance as related to the performance standards and goals for a respective position.
 - c. Hire-in Rate: A new hire may be assigned a wage rate at any level from the minimum of the grade range up to ~~90%-of~~ the midpoint for the position's salary range, provided the new-hire has additional experience, education, etc. that added value to the position. Any additional money required must be approved by the Quorum Court.
 - d. Salary Increase after Six-Month Anniversary Date: A salary increase may be given within an employee's second six months on the job, at the discretion of the elected official, and only if the employee was hired below the ~~90%-of~~ midpoint for the position's salary range. If funds are available in the current budget, the elected official may grant a new employee a salary increase in an amount not to exceed 3%. This increase may not result in a wage that exceeds ~~90%-of~~ the **midpoint of the** salary grade range.